

FIG. 1a.

TABLE: Communicating BID responses over a network from VENDOR to BUYER, *vis-a-vis* (if applicable) an involved SERVICE.

I. From where VENDOR sends or releases its BID.	II. How (if applicable) transit of the BID is mediated by an involved SERVICE.	III. From where BUYER gains first access to the BID.
vendor's machine or site	n/a.	buyer's machine or site ¹
vendor's machine or site	simple hop	buyer's machine or site ²
vendor's machine or site	modified hop	buyer's machine or site ³
vendor's machine or site	conditional exchange	buyer's machine or site ⁴
buyer's server	n/a.	buyer's server ⁵
service's site	service provides (neutral) site	buyer's machine or site ⁶
service's site	service provides (neutral) site	service's site ⁷
vendor's machine or site	service provides (neutral) site	buyer's machine or site ⁸
vendor's machine or site	service provides (neutral) site	service's site ⁹

¹ Eg., by e-mail (or web-mail or other modes), and no hop through an involved SERVICE's server/site.

² Eg., by e-mail (among other modes), with a simple hop through an involved SERVICE's server/site.

³ Eg., by e-mail (among other modes), with a modified hop through an involved SERVICE's server/site.

⁴ Eg., by e-mail (among other modes), with a conditional exchange through an involved SERVICE's server/site.

⁵ Eg., BUYER provides a site serving "request for bid" notices for VENDOR to browse and leave BID responses.

⁶ Eg., SERVICE provides a site serving "request for bid" notices for VENDOR to browse, BUYER downloads BID responses.

⁷ Eg., SERVICE provides a site for BUYER, VENDOR to browse (respectively) for "request for bid" notices, BID responses.

⁸ Eg., included for comparison purposes as entailing any of nos. 2 through 4 above.

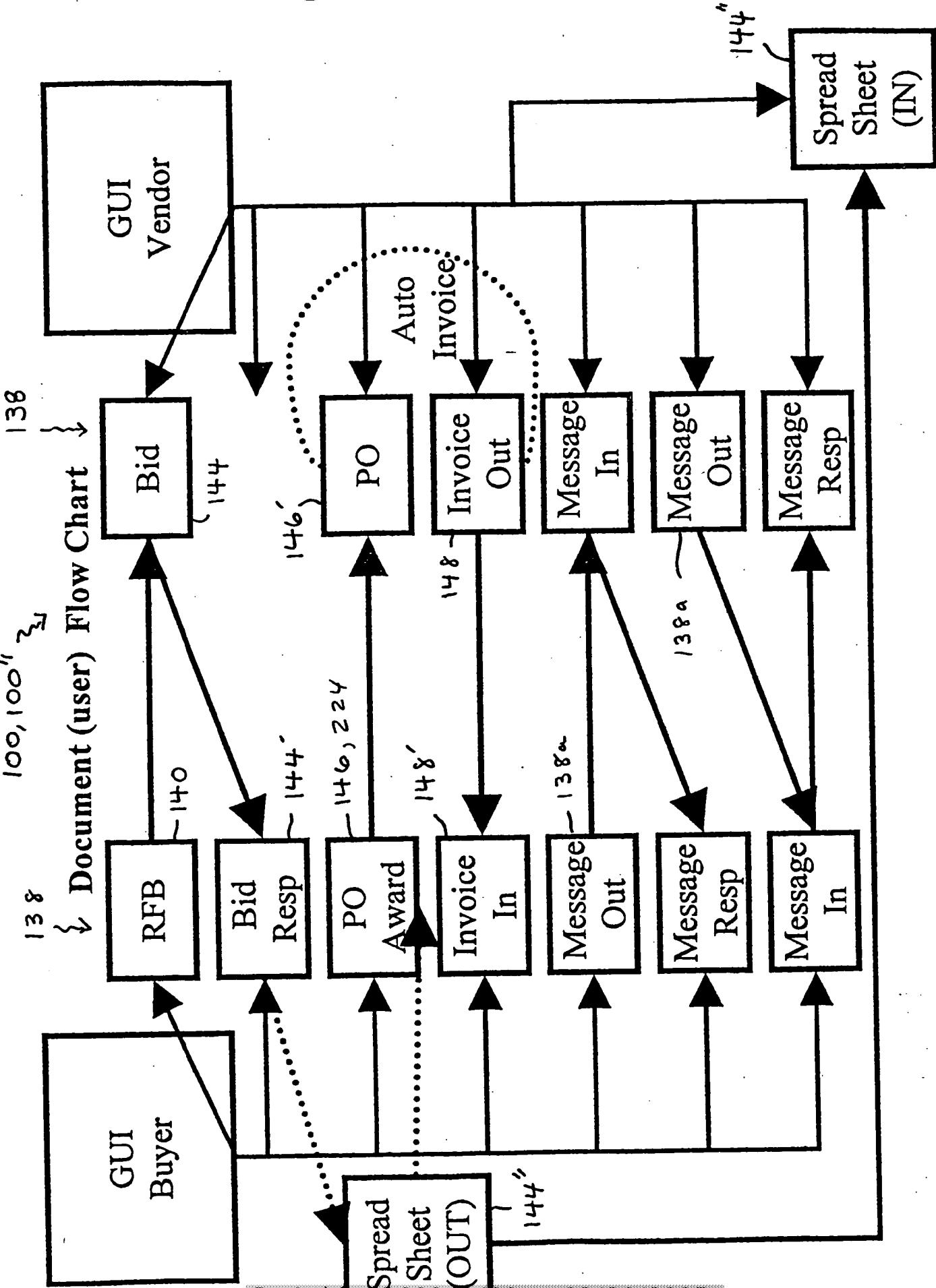
⁹ Eg., VENDOR downloads BID responses onto SERVICE's site, where BUYER browses for such BID responses.

ALTERNATE METHODS

FIG. 1c.

- I. -
VENDORS transfer BID responses to BUYER before deadline.
SERVICE denies BUYER access to the BID responses until after deadline.
- II. -
VENDORS transfer BID responses to SERVICE before deadline, but BID responses encrypted by a given public encryption key.
SERVICE denies BUYER access to the corresponding private encryption key until after deadline.
- III. -
VENDORS transfer BID responses to SERVICE before deadline.
BUYER obligates itself to not call for the BID responses until after the deadline.
SERVICE logs the BUYER's activity.
- IV. -
VENDORS transfer BID responses to BUYER before deadline, but BID responses formatted in compression or code.
BUYER has software to decompress or decode the BID responses, but that activity sets a value for a cookie or, eg., encrypts a message.
SERVICE retrieves the value(s) or encrypted message(s) at some subsequent connection with the BUYER.
SERVICE can analyze the value(s) or encrypted message(s) and conditionally certify the BUYER's faithfulness.
- V. -
VENDORS transfer BID responses to BUYER before deadline, but BID responses formatted in compression or code.
BUYER has software to decompress or decode the BID response, but that activity sets a value in a cookie or, eg., encrypts a message.
BUYER obligates itself to check-in with the SERVICE before unsealing the BID responses (ie., ~ after the deadline too).
BUYER's check-in allows the SERVICE to retrieve the cookie value or encrypted message and certify the BUYER's faithfulness.
- VI. -
VENDORS transfer BID responses to BUYER before deadline, but BID responses formatted in compression or code.
BUYER deprived of software to decompress or decode the BID response, and can only do so by an on-line session(s) with SERVICE.
SERVICE can either (i) deny the BUYER until after the deadline or (ii) log the BUYER's activity.

FIG. 2a.



Unlocked?

Form of REQUEST FOR BID
(Buyer's System)

140, 102

Unlocked?

Form of RESPONSE
(Vendor's System)

144, 104

Unlocked?

Form of BID
(Buyer's System)

144, 102

Header Fields:

Bid Number.
Buyer Name & Address(es).
Origin & Due Date, Sealed?
Group/Single; To; Area.
ID, Delivery & Payment Terms.
Freight & Cost, Total Cost.

Header Fields:

Bid Number.
Buyer Name & Address(es).
Origin & Due Date, Sealed?
Group/Single; To; Area.
ID, Delivery & Payment Terms.
Freight & Cost, Total Cost.

Header Fields:

Bid Number.
Buyer Name & Address(es).
Origin & Due Date, Sealed?
Group/Single; To; Area.
ID, Delivery & Payment Terms.
Freight & Cost, Total Cost.

Line Item Fields:

Item Number.

Quantity.

Unit(s).

• Alternate Quantity.

Unit(s).

• Alternate Unit(s).

Unit(s).

• Seller's Comments.

Unit(s).

Price (ea. Unit).

Description.

171
171
175
175
175

Total Price.

Proposal Messages:

Buyer's.
Vendor's.
Buyer Terms.
Attachments.

Proposal Messages:

Buyer's.
Vendor's.
Buyer Terms.
Vendor Terms.
Attachments.

Proposal Messages:

Buyer's.
Vendor's.
Buyer Terms.
Vendor Terms.
Attachments.

FIG. 2c.

SCAN II

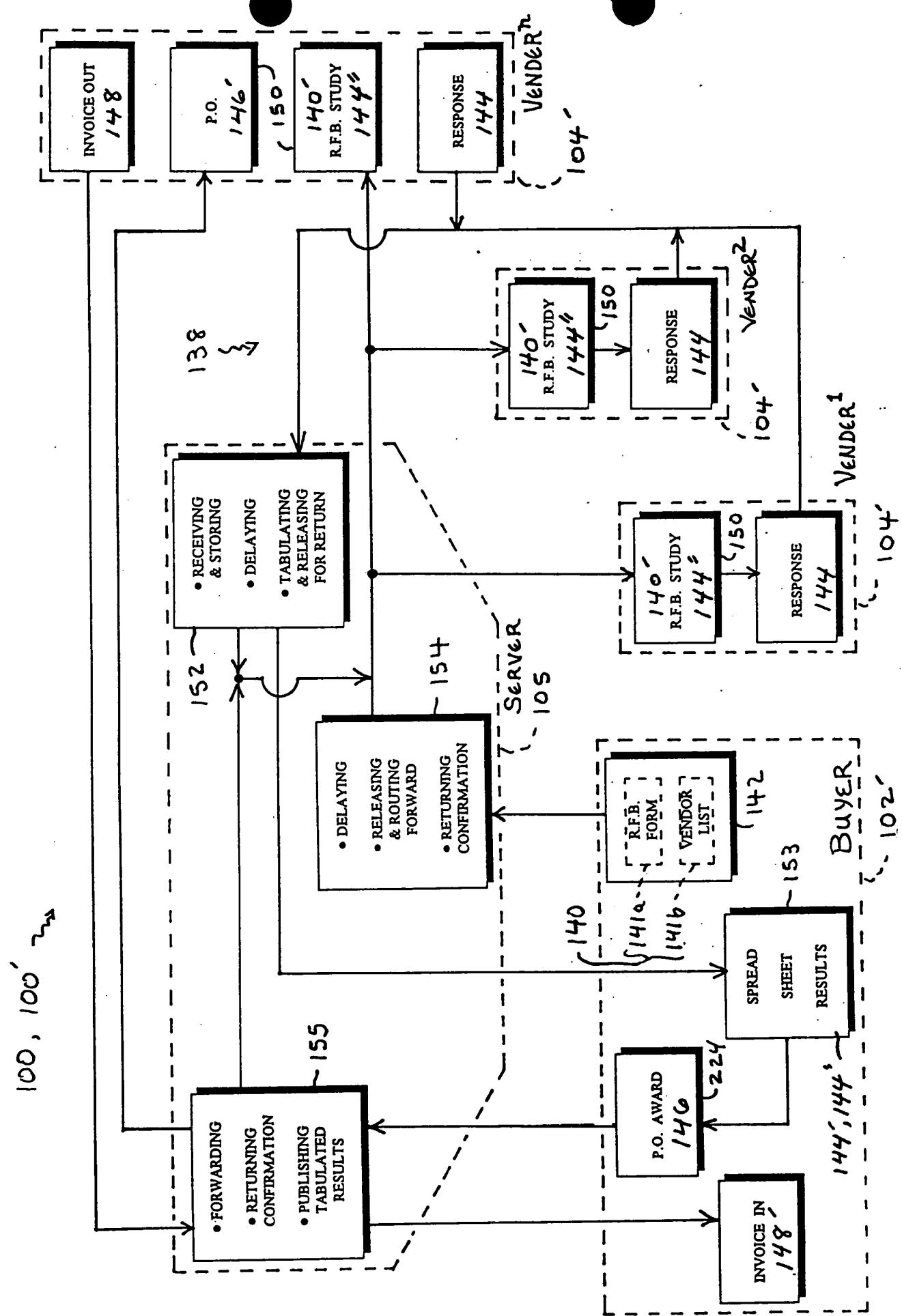


FIG. 2b.

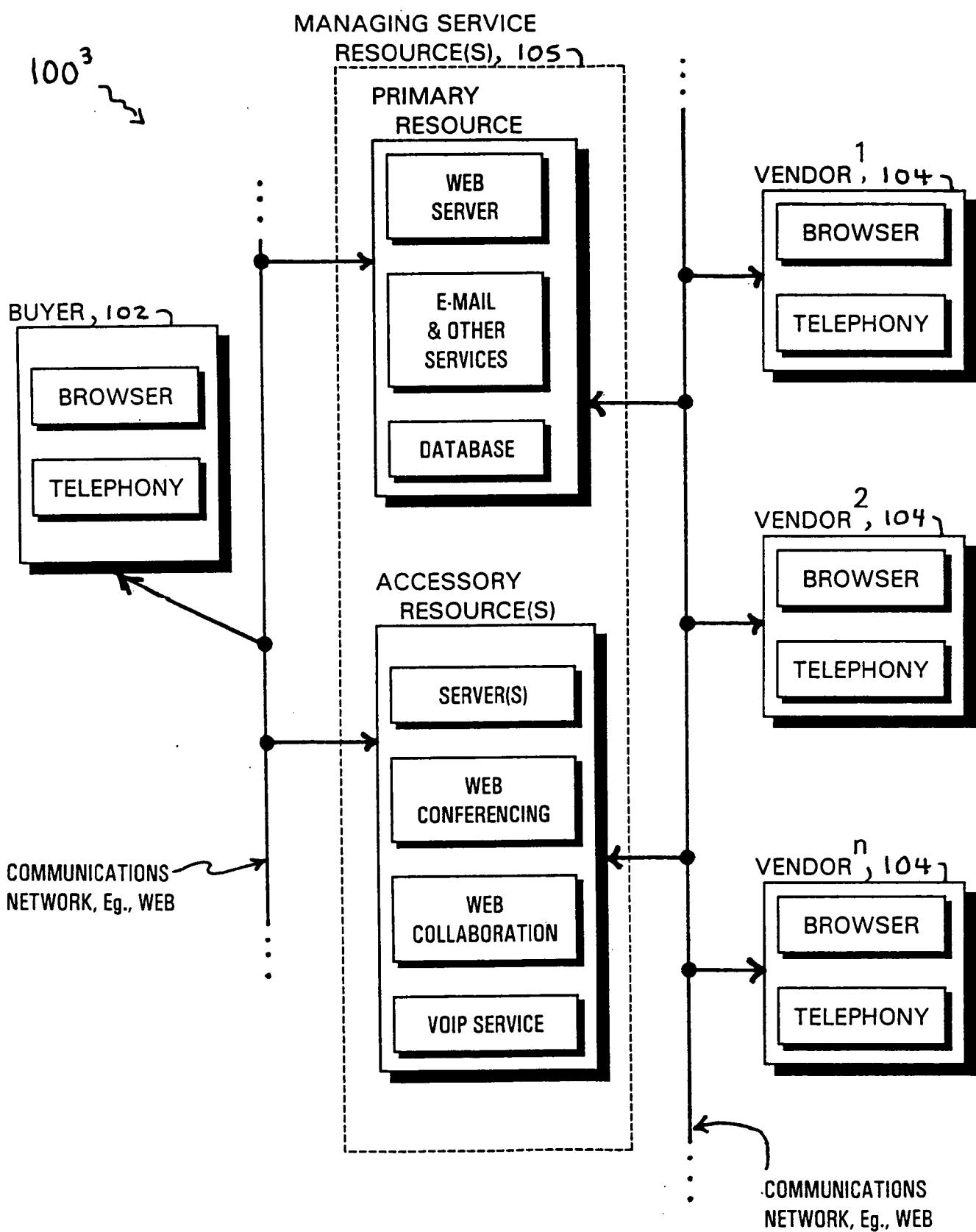


FIG. 3.